

UNITED STATES SENATOR • IOWA

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Remarks of Sen. Chuck Grassley
on Trade Promotion Authority at Event with John Deere Tractor
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I first want to acknowledge all the members who are here: Senator Lugar, Senator Roberts, Senator Ben Nelson, Senator Hagel. I also want to thank Agriculture Secretary Anne Veneman for her presence and for her efforts on behalf of American agriculture. And of course, I want to thank John Deere, for bringing this outstanding example of its craftsmanship to Capitol Hill.

I especially want to acknowledge the men and women of John Deere in Waterloo, Iowa, who built this tractor. They are the real reason why we are here today. More than 800 jobs at the John Deere plant in Waterloo, Iowa, where this tractor is built, are export-related. One out of every five of these John Deere tractors is exported. They are shipped all around the world. But the fact is, we would sell a lot more of these tractors, as well as parts like tractor engines, if we had access to more world markets, and if tariffs were lower. With access to more foreign markets, we would sell more tractors like this one.

We would sell more corn, and more wheat, like the corn and wheat you see here. We would sell more pork. In short, we would sell more of everything we grow on the farm. Our farmers, our pork producers and our farm equipment manufacturers and workers all depend on the income they earn from exporting to take care of their families and their communities. But without trade promotion authority, the President won't have the clout or the credibility to negotiate or conclude good trade deals for America's farmers. That's why we are here today. To say to Congress, give the President trade negotiating authority. Give it to him this year. This is not a Republican issue. It is not a Democrat issue. This is an American issue. The world expects America to lead on trade policy. If we don't, other countries will step forward. They will negotiate preferential trade deals without us. Worse yet, they will take control of the negotiating process.

If we are still debating this issue in Congress while the rest of the world is negotiating a global trade deal this fall in Qatar, we will harm our credibility and our ability to lead new world trade negotiations. No member of Congress wants that to happen. So I urge all of my colleagues to work with me, and with the Members here today, to write and pass trade promotion authority legislation this year.

